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P L A N

F O R

INSTRUCTING YOUTHS

In the KNOWLEDGE of

HUSBANDRY,

Published at the Request of

The RIGHT HONOURABLE and HONOURABLE

DUBLIN SOCIETY.

By Mr. JOHN WYNN BAKER.

D U B L I N :

Printed by S. POWELL and SON, Printers to the SOCIETY,

MDCC LXV.



At a Meeting of the DUBLIN SOCIETY,

At their House in *Shaw's-Court*,

On *Thursday, May 16, 1765.*

Ordered,

THAT Mr. *Baker* be requested to digest and lay before the Society, a Plan for educating a certain Number of Youths in the Knowledge of Husbandry.

At a Meeting of the *Dublin Society* on *Thursday, May 23, 1765.*

Mr. *Baker* laid before the Society his Plan for the Education of Youths in the Knowledge of Husbandry, which was read.

Ordered,

That the same be referred to a Committee of the Members now present, or any three of them, who are to meet at the Society's House To-morrow at twelve o'Clock, and may adjourn from Day to Day, and that they report their Opinion to the Society.

At a Meeting of the *Dublin Society* on *Thursday, May 30, 1765.*

The Rt. Hon. the Earl of *Arran* informed the Society, That the Committee appointed to take into Consideration Mr. *Baker's* Scheme for educating Boys in the Knowledge of Agriculture, had come to the following Resolutions: *viz.*

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Resolved,

Resolved, That it is the Opinion of this Committee,

1. That the Apprenticing a competent Number of Boys to skilful Farmers in every County, may be a Means of improving and extending Agriculture and Tillage.

2. That Mr. *Baker* be requested, by the Society, to take upon him the Instruction of the first Apprentices, and that five be the Number to make the Experiment upon.

3. That a yearly Sum, and not an Apprentice Fee, be given to Mr. *Baker* with the said Boys.

4. That the Sum of twelve Pounds *per Annum*, may be a reasonable Allowance for the Feeding and Cloathing each of the said Boys.

5. That two of the said five Boys be instructed in Making the Instruments for Agriculture and Tillage.

6. That Mr. *Baker's* said Scheme contains many useful Matters.

7. That the Printing and Publishing the said Scheme will be of great Use.

8. That the said Mr. *Baker* be requested, by the Society, at their Expence, to cause the same to be printed and published.

And the Question being severally put on each of the said Resolutions, the Society agreed with the Committee in the same.

Ordered,

That Mr. *Baker* be requested to cause 1500 Copies of his said Scheme, to be printed for the Use of the Society.



A
P L A N
F O R
INSTRUCTING YOUTHS
In the KNOWLEDGE of
HUSBANDRY.

LAST *Thursday*, I was Honoured with Instructions from this Society, to prepare against this Day, a Scheme for the more effectual Instruction of Youth in the Knowledge of Husbandry. The Notice being short, my Thoughts on a Subject of so much Importance, I fear will not appear to be so well digested as I could wish; but if in their *crude* State, they shall in any Degree contribute to so Noble an Undertaking, I shall be happy.

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The Difficulty there is in obtaining good Workmen, even in the *common* Husbandry, is felt by *every* Gentleman who is concerned in country Business, and by *every* Farmer. Wedded to old Customs, the common Run of Workmen cannot be prevailed upon to execute *any* System, which exceeds the Bounds of their Understanding, or clashes with the Practice they have been enured to: from these Causes, have arisen, the many Miscarriages, which have attended judicious Practices in Husbandry; and too often, brought the Authors of them into Disrepute.

From these Considerations, I presume the present Scheme has taken its Rise; for, whilst we attempt to instruct *Men*, whose *imaginary* Knowledge, renders them above being taught, we can never hope to disperse about the Kingdom, such as are worthy of being called Workmen: Besides, common Hirelings are only temporary in their Residence, daily shifting from Master to Master, regardless of any Ties of Gratitude, altho' Fed when they are Hungry, Cloathed when they are Naked, or by a Master's Care, snatch'd from the Grave, when they are upon the Verge of it.

This Consideration seems to prove, that it will be almost impossible to instruct such Persons, as have already been bred to Husbandry; tho' this Observation must not extend to *all* Workmen, for now and then, there is one to be found, who *will obey*: a Criterion, which ever gives me Hope of such a Man's receiving
Instruction,

Instruction, and therefore of becoming useful: however, as that but seldom happens; Boys, unacquainted with Business, seem to be the proper Objects for an Undertaking of this Kind.

The Seminaries established here, (to the Honour of this Kingdom) for the Preservation of Infants, who would otherwise be lost to the Community, will at all Times afford Boys, *more*, I am sorry to say, than this Undertaking can provide for; and those are the most *proper* Boys; for their Connections with their Parents are broken, they have no Home to fly to, no pilfering Mother, or idle Father to instruct them in the Ways of Wickedness: Whereas, if Boys which have been at large, were to be taken, from different Parts of the Kingdom; they would be unruly, Connections of various Kinds would invite them abroad, Disobedience would ensue, which, it is to be feared, would be followed by Idleness and Destruction. For these Reasons, I do conceive, the properest of any, if they can be had, would be the Foundlings, who never knew any Home, but the Hospital which receives them, nor any Parent, but the generous Publick.

From whatever Seminary Boys shall be *selected* for this Purpose, in order to accomplish the End proposed, they should be taught to Read and Write extremely well, and must be Masters of Accounts, as far *at least*, as the Rule of Three.

Here,

Here, one Difficulty offers itself to me, which is, the Danger of the Boys being in some degree Corrupted, during this Part of their Education; for they will begin this Branch of it, at about ten Years of Age, and I should hope would be completed by fourteen; a Period, in which Boys are very susceptible of Corruption. From ten to fourteen they generally begin to shew themselves, and what Employment will best suit their Turn of Mind. Under these Considerations, I own I have some Fears, if the Boys are educated in the general Manner, practised in charitable Seminaries; where I have too often had Opportunities of seeing the shameful Neglect of their Morals. And therefore, I submit to the Consideration of the Society, whether the Boys selected for this Purpose, should not be chosen at ten Years of Age, and lodg'd under the Care of the Person who shall hereafter instruct them in the Branch for which this Scheme is calculated? He would, by the Time they arrive to an Age fit for being bound Apprentices, be able to form a Judgment of every Boy's Genius and Turn of Mind, and such as should be thought not fit for the Occupation of a Farmer, might be otherwise disposed of. Should this be thought an adviseable Method, a Person properly qualified must be employed as a School-master, under the Inspection of the Person who is to teach these Boys the Business of Farming. This Method, I own strikes me, as promising many Advantages, but I submit it to the Consideration of the Society, and would be understood, that this Part of the Scheme, I mean as an Addition.

dition to the other Part, which will vary it, only in Proportion as this shall be adopted or rejected.

The Boys being educated in the Manner before mentioned, and due Regard being had to their Morals, Tempers and Dispositions, they will be fitted to receive Instruction in the Business they are intended for.

It may perhaps be objected, that Boys so qualified, when they come to be dispersed about the Kingdom, will be above working themselves; that probably may be the Case, but the Event depends upon the Gentlemen who shall employ them; however we will suppose it should so turn out, that the Boys who shall be instructed, should become Bailiffs in different Parts of the Kingdom, in that Case, they would be instructing People in the Methods which they have been taught, and consequently will in that Respect, answer the Purpose intended by this Scheme, for they will be in the Employments, which are now occupied by *Pretenders* to Business, who are no less *Ignorant*, than they are *Idle and Conceited*, for I find it is not the Custom in this Country for common Bailiffs to work, and indeed the most ignorant of them, will not put their Hands to any Kind of Business, which I have experienced to my *great Contempt* of them.

To begin such an Undertaking, I should conceive ten Boys would be a proper Number, for the following Reasons. First, that ten can be maintained at a less Expence in Proportion, than five; the same woman will dress Food for ten, as easily as she can for five,
and

and five would require her Attendance as regularly as ten.

Such a Woman must be hired as their Matron, to take Charge of their Shirts, Stockings, Sheets, Beds, Bedding, and various other Things which would be necessary for them. She must occasionally have another Woman to wash their Linen, mend their Stockings, and many other Things which would attend, even such a Number, but when more Boys shall be added, another Woman or two would be absolutely necessary, that the Boys may be taken proper Care of.

A small Kind of Barrack should be erected, consisting of a large Kitchen, a small Room for the Matron, a large Hall for the Boys to eat in, and another over it for them to sleep in, another small one by Way of Infirmary, and another Room for a Clerk or Bailiff, where he should always be, except in the Hours of Labour, to keep the Boys in good Order, and to inform the Person who shall be the Conductor of such an Undertaking, of any capital Faults which the Boys may be guilty of. This Barrack must be situated immediately under the Eye of the Master.

For this Barrack, supposing the Number of Boys to be ten, in the Beginning, seven Beds will be necessary, fourteen Pairs of Sheets, twenty one Blankets, and seven Rugs, and many other Things, which I do not immediately think of, that they may live decently, as I do conceive, it will be necessary to possess them of

an Habit of Cleanliness, as well as to instruct them in their Business.

The Boys should all be dressed in one decent, plain Uniform, consisting, of at *least* three Shirts, a Flannel, or Frize Waistcoat to work in, and a Waggoner's Shirt, in the English Manner, a Suit of Frize Cloaths for Sundays, an every Day and Sundays Hat, three Pair of Stockings, and two Pair of Shoes. And once a Year every Boy should be new cloathed.

They should be all Protestants, and regularly every *Sunday*, or other great Days, go to Church, attended by a proper Person. Here the Use of the School-master is again of Importance, as well as that of living in the Barrack.

In Proportion to the Allowance which shall be allotted for their Maintenance, they would be fed, of which it is not easy to fix the Manner, till the Sallary shall be named, which shall be allowed the Master for that Purpose, but the better they are maintained, the happier they will be, and the more capable of Business.

In stipulating the Sum which shall be allowed, I am persuaded due Regard will be had to the Contingences, which must attend such an Undertaking; for at all Events, the Boys must be decently maintained; and it will sometimes unavoidably happen, that Sicknefs will attend them; at which Times they will require *Humane* Attention, and an *additional* Expente.

I shall

I shall now proceed to the Manner in which I think these Boys should be instructed in the Business of Farming.

When this Scheme was proposed last *Thursday*, and spoken to by many Gentlemen, they did me the Honour to express themselves, as if I were the Person they would have engaged in this Undertaking; a Consideration, which would have prevented my laying any Plan before this Society, relative to the Subject, had I not been called upon to do it: the Pleasure I receive in obeying their Directions, I have no other Way of shewing, than by endeavouring to execute their Commands.

I am of Opinion, that of the *first* ten Boys, at least two of them should be confined principally to the Manufacture, for making the Instruments for Husbandry, (and which is now under the Consideration of the Society) provided it shall be the Sense of the Society to establish such a Manufacture: and indeed *without it*, the present Scheme must be *abortive* in itself, for it would be to no Purpose to instruct Workmen *in an Art*, which they can *never afterwards practice*, for Want of Tools, to execute with. The ablest Pilot cannot direct the Ship, without an Helm, neither can the Workman turn the Glebe without a Plough.

If I should be honoured with the Confidence of this Society in the present Scheme, my Method of conducting the Education of the Boys, would be somewhat in the following Manner.

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In Order to preserve the Learning which they come to me with, I should oblige them to write and cast Account three Times a Week.

I should have a sufficient Number of some of the *best* Books in Husbandry, in which I should oblige them to read every Evening; and at proper Periods, I should myself examine them, as to the Subject they have been upon, the better to explain, and inculcate the Sense of the Author.

As soon as I could accomplish such a Work, I would draw up a Kind of System, by Way of Question and Answer, by which, I flatter myself, they would be instructed with more Expedition, than they could by the Generality of Books, particularly, when *in Aid of such Instructions*, they will every Day be concerned in the *operative* Part.

I should at proper Seasons, walk with them to view my different Experiments, and endeavour to possess them of my Reasons, for the various Measures, which they will every Day see me take, in my different Enquiries, and demonstrate the Use of such Measures, by shewing them the Consequences.

As soon as they should be able, I should employ them in the various Branches of Husbandry, and endeavour to make them perfect Masters of the *operative Part*, by their *Practice* of it.

Before

Before they should be out of their Time, I should take Care to instruct them in my System of Book-keeping, which would render them Servants of inestimable Value to such as should afterwards employ them ; for by this Method of keeping Books, the minutest Article, be the Scope of Business ever so large, appears clearly by itself, and the Expence of each separately, even in the minutest Circumstances of Labour ; besides many other simple Rules, by which, Precision and Exactness is obtained with very little Trouble, and in the Practice of which, I find great Pleasure and Satisfaction. But this depends upon their being *properly Educated*, before they are bound Apprentices.

As I should discover the Genius of a Boy ripening, I should endeavour to invite him to the making Notes and Observations of his own, and now and then call for them for my Perusal. And I should wish, that the excelling Boy or Boys, should have some honorary Premium afforded by the Society, such as a small Medal, or some other distinguishing Mark of Merit, which should always be worn, by such as should gain the Premiums : Such little Honours would raise an Emulation amongst the Boys, to an Exertion of their Talents ; and I should myself follow the same Method in rewarding such as should excel in the Execution of their Business, which would certainly animate them in their Pursuits ; whereas, a total Neglect of Merit, I should fear, would rather make them languid in their Endeavours ; to excite which, I should totally disapprove of Severity. And
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a small Reward of Merit from this Society, would have more Effect, I should conceive, than were I to give them five Times the Value.

And as the Boys should advance in Age, and that the Day shall approach for their being out of their Time, I should wish the Society would give, as a Reward to Merit, every one which shall produce my Certificate of his good Behaviour, and Abilities, a new Suit of Cloaths and five Guineas in Money, to begin the World with, the Day he shall be out of his Time. They being apprised, that Merit only would be entitled to such a Bounty, I do conceive, would Encourage them to apply themselves more assiduously, than they might otherwise do.

When they shall be out of their Time, I should wish the Society to have them appear at this Board, to advise them as to their future Conduct, and to recommend such as shall gain this last Reward of the Society, to such Gentlemen as shall apply to the Society for them; for there I should wish the Application to be made, and not to me on any Account, for Reasons Obvious enough.

Suppose, to begin this Undertaking, ten Boys shall be thought a proper Number, every Year after, five more may be added; thus, at the End of seven Years, they would be thirty in Number, the ten *first* taken, at *that Time*, being ready to be dispersed about the Kingdom, as the Society's Influence should direct; by
which

which Means, ever after, five more would be ready to go off in like Manner, every Year. But if upon a Tryal of this Scheme, it should be thought necessary to increafe or lessen the Number, that will always be determined by the Direction of the Society.

If this Scheme should take Place, it would be my earnest Request, that some Regulation should be formed by the Society, for their frequent Inspection of the Treatment the Boys should meet with, for if I should happen to be honoured with an Agency of so *much Importance* from this Society, I shall wish to avoid every *Possibility* of being charged with an improper Conduct.

Should any Boy happen to turn out refractory, and of an ungovernable Temper, I hope some Method may be thought of by the Society, for my being freed from him, as such a one might not only give me infinite Trouble, but might corrupt all the rest of the Boys.



THE END.

